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A HOME WEEKLY FOR WINTER NIGHTS AND SUMMER DAYS.

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THE BEAUTIFUL ANGEL.

BY EBEN E. EKSFORD.

"I am so weary!" she told us; "Tired of sorrow and pain; Tired of toiling and striving; Always and always in vain." Slowly she faded, as death, into a beautiful night. And we wept, as for one who is going Out evermore from our sight. We had thought that death was a terror; A visitor dark and grim; And we shuddered, as he came nearer, And shrank away from him. But he came to her so sweetly, So gently—as those most kind. Draw near to those whom they pity— That terror fled our mind. And we thought, as we saw her lying In death, with her face grown fair, No traces of cares or sorrows, Of tears or of suffering there, That death was a pitying angel, Who loveth all so well, That he bringeth to those awestruck His rest unspeakable.

Tiger Dick:

THE CASHIER'S CRIME.

A TALE OF MAN'S HATE AND WOMAN'S FAITH.

BY PHILIP S. WARNE.

CHAPTER III.

A FALSE FRIEND.

We have anticipated, in order to bring into consecutive review those incidents between which there is a natural association. We must now go back to the day subsequent to Fred Powell's initiation into the mysteries of THE JUNGLE.

All day long a cloud had rested on Mr. Powell's face; and Cecil, watching him, guessed at the truth, and was in a measure prepared for what was to come. After all the clerks had taken their leave, the banker fussed about his desk a little while, and then nervously clearing his throat, turned toward Cecil, and began:

"Mr. Beaumont, during the few years of our acquaintance I have found you a man in every way worthy of confidence; and I now feel as if I could approach you as a friend. I wish to consult you on a very embarrassing subject—one that is full of pain for me, as a parent."

Mr. Powell hesitated, and nervously rearranged some papers on his desk. Cecil Beaumont cast a quick glance at him. From the way in which he began, Cecil was in doubt as to the drift of his words. He replied in a voice modulated to sympathetic tones:

"I am truly grateful, sir, for your estimate of me, and for the confidence you are pleased to repose in me. Believe me, I shall be only too happy to be of service to you in any way in my power."

"It is about my son," pursued Mr. Powell, with increasing perturbation. "I wish to inquire into his associations. You are a young man, Mr. Beaumont, and more or less familiar with the manner of life of other young men about you. Furthermore, you, not being related to Frederick, would have ready access to facts concerning him which would be withheld from me, as his father, even if I could bring myself to the humiliation of publishing my anxiety about him, by applying to my friends."

The father stopped with flushed face and averted eyes. Cecil coughed slightly, and seemed almost as much embarrassed as the elder man.

"I am not much of a hand to go around—I keep to myself a great deal—and therefore am not so familiar with Frederick as another in my place would be likely to be. But if you could intiate the line of inquiry, sir—what you wish to know about him?"

And, leaving the sentence incomplete, Cecil looked up at his employer, apparently in helpless embarrassment.

A paroxysm of pain shot athwart Mr. Powell's face, but he set his lips firmly, and said:

"Last night he was brought home in a state of intoxication. This is the first case that has come to my knowledge—the first intimation that his habits were not what they should be. Men do not leap at a bound into dissipation, Mr. Beaumont. There must have been introductory steps. I wish to ascertain through you, if you will lend me your assistance, to what extent this has been carried, who are his intimates, and how long he has been under their pernicious influence."

A covert gleam of malicious triumph shot from Cecil's eyes, but he replied in a tone of earnest commiseration:

"I cannot express to you, sir, the pain it gives me to hear you speak as you have. It would be unjust to you, and perhaps prejudicial to Frederick, to hide from you that I have for some time deprecated the company with which your son has seen fit to associate; but I did not dream that he would so far forget himself as your words imply."

"It is playing with edge-tools, Mr. Beaumont," replied the parent, with a tremor in his voice and tears in his eyes. "No man is safe, but he who abstains absolutely from the use of intoxicating liquors. I would rather bury the boy to-day, as dearly as I love him, than to see him grow up to a life of degradation and a grave of shame—the slave of a hellish appetite, that knows no satiety."



"Sit down and take something to cool off on," said Dick.

"Look a-here, boss," said the "decoy," "I pass. What are you going to make it? Have you joined the Good Templars?"

Billy grinned at the idea.

"No templars in mine," replied Fred.

"Swore off with somebody, perhaps? Very foolish practice. Have to place your whole dependence on water this warm weather. Too thin!"

"I haven't sworn off. Confound it, man! somebody's blown to the governor. He knows the whole story—Tiger Dick and all."

"The Gentleman in Black he does!"

"Some blabbing booby has dipped in his ear where it wasn't needed. I knew well enough that I had made a fool of myself, without a lecture on the subject. I don't see how I came to lose my head. Otherwise I should never have gone to such a place."

"Mixed drinks, my bosom friend. Guess I was a little boozey myself. Feel kind of queer about the head-piece yet. But say, Fred, what kind of a swell is that cashier of yours? Would he throw the vail of charity over your little peccadilloes, if they accidentally came to his knowledge?"

"Not he!" replied Fred, with sudden interest. "He felt, instinctively, that there was a rivalry between Cecil and himself for the favor of Florence Goldthorpe."

"Then I guess he blabbed to the gov'nor."

"But how did he know anything about it—even to the amount that I won?"

"Friend of my youth, I don't try to screen myself—not a bit. In the cause of temperance, we destroyed some reg'lar p'son, lest it should incurr the innocent and unwary. Perhaps I was a little over-zealous; any way, I tried to do my whole duty. Then, in the moment of my weakness, that snake-in-the-grass inveigled me into his stronghold, or in other words, the bank, and pumped me dry. As I said before, I don't try to screen myself. I confided in him as in the friend of my bosom. But, Fred, you know I didn't mean to give you away. How could I know that he was such a sneak?"

Fred frowned angrily.

"I thought you knew enough to keep your tongue between your teeth," he said.

"Sorry, Fred—detected sorry; but you know I wouldn't sell you out. And I have been honest about it. Made a clean breast of it, when I might have observed a judicious silence and saved my credit. You can't deny that."

"Oh, it's all right," said Fred. "Good-evening, tiger."

And he walked off with his hands in his pockets.

"Heigho!" sighed the "decoy," disconsolately.

"Here's a pretty kettle of fish. Tiger Dick pays me to introduce a young gent, and then I let my infernal tongue dish the whole thing. Gads! he'll ship me, if he finds out what a confounded bungler I've been. Well, I've learned a lesson; I won't be as frank with him as with Fre."

He didn't know that he had been playing into Tiger Dick's hands in the best manner possible.

CHAPTER IV.

A DOUBLE PLOT.

SEVERAL days subsequent to the events narrated in the last chapter, Cecil Beaumont sat at his desk alone. There was the old look of weariness and despair on his face. His cheeks were pale and haggard.

He let his head drop upon his arm, the picture of dejection.

"Oh, curse it all!" he muttered, bitterly; "I wish I was dead. I am making a hell of my life—and for what?"

"All that I put into that infernal speculation only sinks the rest deeper. Luck is dead against me. Grace will never come up, until I get out of it. Well, I've played my last card. I dare not take any more. Detection may come any day—even to-morrow, and then the thing's all gone to smash. Well, I don't care. Any thing's better than this eternal worry."

"I'd emigrate some fine morning, but that human tiger watches me as a cat watches a mouse. Some of his infernal spies are at my elbow at every tack and turn. If he suspected as much as a thought of breaking faith with him, I might as well get measured for my coffin. He'd supply the rope and hangman. There's only one way of getting out of his clutches."

He shuddered, thinking of suicide as the only means of escape.

After a while he thrust the papers before him into his desk, and turning out the gas, left the bank.

In the comparative gloom, midway between two lamp-posts, and before some wholesale houses that were closed and dark, a paper was thrust into Cecil's hand. At the same moment a man brushed by him and passed on down the street at a rapid walk.

There were others passing and repassing; but this man had come so near as to nearly touch him; and, without stopping to look at the paper, Cecil resolved to follow him.

He had a satchel in his hand and a shawl thrown across his arm. He went directly to the depot, purchased a ticket, boarded the train, put his hat in the rack, and composed himself for slumber. The train moved off, and Cecil realized that he was "sold"—he had followed the wrong man.

Stepping into the waiting-room, Cecil unfolded the paper and read as follows:

"My dear Prince—I am dying to see you. Come without delay. I have the pins arranged for a ten-strike. This will be delivered by a messenger of the GENTLE RICHARD."

Half an hour afterward, Cecil Beaumont, disguised as before, sat in the presence of Tiger Dick.

"Well, what's wanted?" he asked, looking straight before him, with his arms resting on the table.

"I've been thinking," said Tiger Dick, "that our little game ain't the surest thing in the world. We've got to wait too long for results. Now, the lady may die, or the old gent may decline to drop off the hooks. Either contingency would be disastrous to us. While we're waiting for dinner, we want something to stay our stomachs, eh?"

"We may want a great many things," replied Cecil, gloomily.

"How would you like from twenty-five to a hundred thousand dollars in your pocket, this day week?" asked the Tiger, looking through the smoke of his cigar at Cecil.

The cashier looked up with a flash of interest.

"Where can you get that amount?" he asked, incredulously.

"What would you do for such a prize?" asked the Tiger.

"Sell my soul!" declared the cashier, with sudden vehemence.

"Hello!" mused the Tiger, with a searching glance at the other. "What's the row, now?" Then, noticing that Cecil seemed embarrassed at his sudden outburst, he added, mentally: "Guess he showed his hand when he didn't mean to."

But he said aloud, with a laugh:

"It is clear of incumbrance?"

"I guess the devil has a pretty heavy mortgage on both of us. But, to return to business: from off what bush are you going to pick twenty-five or a hundred thousand dollars?"

"Answer me a few questions, first. The gentle Freddy carries a key to the bank, does he not?"

"Yes."

"Who sleeps there nights?"

"The janitor."

"An old man?"

"Yes; but not an infant in muscle, for all that."

"Bother his muscle. That's of no account. Does anybody else ever sleep there?"

"I have a room there, which I occupy sometimes, when we are very busy."

"Hurrah!" cried the Tiger, almost leaping from his seat, in the enthusiasm with which he received the announcement. "By Jove! that's a trump card! Hold on, pard, don't deal any more until I put on my thinking-cap for a moment!"

He scratched his head and thought eagerly; then he struck the table with his fist.

"Just the card!" he cried, exultingly. "That simplifies the whole thing. Nothing would be thought of your occupying the room any night just now?"

"No. We are very busy just now, and next week we will have to make out our yearly statement."

"Dumped right at our door, by jingo! Oh! the devil helps his own, there's no mistake about it! Pard, where does that janitor sleep?"

"He has a sofa bedstead within ten feet of the vault."

"In plain sight of the strong box?"

"Pard, there's where that twenty-five or a hundred thousand dollars lies ready to our hand!"

Tiger Dick leaned across the table, and fastened his eyes upon Cecil's face. The cashier drew back with a sudden flush.

"Do you propose to rob the bank?" he asked, in a suppressed voice.

"Oh, no!" replied the Tiger, with a laugh. "Only negotiating a loan, you know. But, have you any qualms of conscience?" he added, with a sneer.

"It's a bold game," replied Cecil, "and I have no particular ambition to break stone or peg shoes for the next ten or fifteen years."

"Are you afraid?" asked the Tiger, with a curling lip. "But, nothing will be required of you but to play the hero overpowered by numbers."

"And the janitor?"

"That's just the king pin of the whole plot. We couldn't dispense with him in any way. Here's our little game."

And while Cecil listened attentively, Tiger Dick unfolded the scheme in detail.

"Won't that hold water?" he asked, when he had concluded.

Cecil Beaumont sat with tightly-compressed lips, panting breath, and eyes whose flashing fire was hidden beneath their drooping lids. Here was an opportunity to cover up his defalcations beyond the chance of detection. With the success of this plot, he would cast his most galling chain, and stand forth a comparatively free man. Yet he did not wish to seem to yield readily.

"I confess that I have but little stomach for this kind of business," he said, with a frown, of impatience.

"Look-a-here, pard," said the Tiger, in a measured tone. "Do you want to do a little neighborly kindness to the cad who sports the black-eyed peri? Don't you see that his little set-to with the tiger, his signing his gov'nor's name to loose bits of paper, and his share in this little amusement, are all of a stripe, and will sink him lower than Tartarus? Ain't that just what we want? And if a few thousands come in incidentally, who's going to curse his luck on that account?"

Cecil Beaumont drew his breath hard through his set teeth, his nostrils quivered, and his eyes fairly blazed. The crimson tide surged up to his forehead, and then bursted back to his heart, leaving his face livid with jealous hatred.

"I will do my part," he said, in a choking voice. "Appoint your time."

"Aha!" was the Tiger's mental reflection on the storm of passion he had awakened in the other. "That's a tender spot. But I hold a hand in that little game, too, as you'll find, some of these fine days."

He said aloud:

"I haven't made all my arrangements yet. I wanted to see the way clear first. I'll sound Billy Saunderson. I guess he's prime. He likes money, like the rest of us. And of late he appears to have something on his mind. If I might venture to guess, I'd say that he was in debt to Messrs. Brown & Thurlow, without their knowledge. If so, we've got him."

A flush came into Cecil's face, at the Tiger's suspicions, and he arose, saying:

"Well, if this is all, you can count on me as soon as you are ready—and the sooner the better."

Later in the evening, Tiger Dick and the "decoy duck" sat on opposite sides of the same little table in the Tiger's sanctum. For half an hour the Tiger had been chattering and plumping his subordinate with liquor. Now, considering him in proper condition, he broached the subject for which what had gone before was a preparation.

"Billy, you have no particular antipathy for the recognized medium of exchange?"

"Oh, hush, pard! Knock me down with some of the root!" replied Mr. Saunderson, with a pathetic cadence in his maudlin voice.

"Are you hard pressed, Billy?" asked the Tiger, with friendly interest.

"Pard, I'm just a-hanging on with teeth and toe-nails," replied the "decoy duck," in a confidential, almost pleading, tone.

"I guess I've got a little job for you, boss."

"Have you, my bosom friend? It's a straw to a drowning man, I assure you. If you can give me a lift now, I'll be your aunt Hannah for a twelvemonth—help me Bob, I will!"

"Can you keep a close tongue in your head?" asked the Tiger.

"Pard, I'm as close as a bandbox!" asseverated Mr. Saunderson, stoutly, though he secretly winced, recollecting his recent lapse in that particular.

"How would you like a cool hundred?" asked the Tiger, carelessly.

"The deuce!" cried Billy, leaping to his feet, almost sobered by his astonishment and delight. A hundred dollars meant a great deal to him, just then.

"Sit down and take something to cool off," said Dick, with a flash of triumph, pushing the decanter toward his excited companion.

Billy resumed his seat and tossed off the liquor hurriedly.

"What's trumps, pard?" he asked, looking inquiringly at the Tiger.

Tiger Dick drew a little volume from a drawer under the table, and slid it across to the "decoy duck."

"Do you know what that is?" he asked.

"The deuce!—the Bible!" exclaimed Billy, examining the book in bewilderment. "Queer kind of literature for this shop, ain't it, pard? or do you devote your leisure to its perusal?"

"Never you mind what I do with it. I have a use for it now. I want you to hold it in your hand and repeat some words after me."

"Hold on, pard. How do I know that you ain't going to make me swear away my patrimony for a mess of pottage, or come the Ku-Klux dodge on me, or something of that sort?"

"If we come to anything you don't want to stick to, you can stop and back out, any time. But remember there's a hundred dollars begging you to take charge of it."

"That's fair enough, by hoky! Deal away, pard—deal away."

"By this book which I hold in my hand," dictated the Tiger.

"By this book which I hold in my hand," repeated the "decoy."

"I do solemnly swear—"

"Never to reveal, by word of mouth, writing, look, sign, or in any other manner—"

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"The proposition made to me this night, nor aught pertaining thereto."

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"And I do solemnly swear that, if I accept the proposition—"

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"I will never, by word of mouth, writing, or in any other manner—"

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"Confess my own act in pursuance thereof—"

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"Nor in any way refer to anything that may flow, or may seem to flow from, or be connected with my act—"

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"In such a manner as to throw suspicion upon any person or persons whom I may be believed to be concerned in any transaction connected with my act—"

"Let up, pard. I can't crack that nut. Let's make the journey by short stages, over such rough ground," said Billy, breaking off.

Tiger Dick repeated it for him, phrase by phrase, and then continued:

"Nor in a manner calculated to awaken the suspicion that the facts are not such as they appear—"

"Nor in a manner calculated to awaken the suspicion that the facts are not such as they appear—"

"So help me God!"

"So help me God!"

"Now kiss the book."

Billy complied, laying it on the table with the remark:

"That's a tight one, old hoss. Gads! I won't be able to so much as lift an eye-winker after this."

"I want it tight," replied the Tiger, grimly.

"And, my friend, here's another titbit for you to ruminate. If you ever break faith with me by so much as a breath, your life won't be worth a toss. In the Rocky Mountain country, men learned that Tiger Dick wasn't to be played with."

"No fear of me, to cap. Drive ahead. What do you want me to do?"

Tiger Dick explained to Billy Saunderson the part he wished him to play. When he was through, the "decoy duck" puckered up his face and said:

"I say, boss, wasn't that a big noise for the amount of damage done? From that trifle of an oath that you imposed on me, I thought you wanted me to massacre the President and his cabinet, and fetch of the Capitol in my breeches-pocket."

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"I

A halt was ordered and a scout sent forward to reconnoiter. He soon returned with the intelligence that a single white man was encamped in the woods by the fire.

The chief selected five warriors from the party and sent them forward to capture the unknown intruder.

With the silence of phantoms, the warriors crept stealthily forward through the gloom. They soon came in sight of the camp, but to their surprise and disappointment the man was gone. But that his absence was only temporary, was evident from one fact: his horse remained hatched near the fire, and seemed oblivious to all earthly things save the sweet enjoyment of a sound slumber.

The savages remained concealed nearly an hour, waiting the return of the man; but to their regret he came not. A hasty consultation was held, which drew out the belief that the enemy had got wind of their approach and feeling far more safe in trusting to his own legs than those of his antiquated-looking old horse, he had left it behind.

With all that caution with which a wolf feels its way toward a carcass not visited before, the savages crept from their concealment and approached the camp-fire.

The old horse opened its eyes and kicked out viciously at the open air, as though it had been awakened from a bad dream.

The savages laughed at this sudden demonstration of the slumbering beast.

The red-skin forgot all else in their desire for savage sport, and one of them crept softly up and pricked the old horse with the keen point of his knife. But quicker than a flash of lightning, the animal whirled and planted its heels in the Indian's stomach, sending his body in the air, and his spirit to the happy hunting-grounds.

This put a sudden termination to the fun, and a goodly distance between them and the deadly heels of the treacherous old horse. A messenger was dispatched for the main column which soon came up.

Octavia could scarcely repress a cry of surprise when her eyes fell upon the old horse hatched within the full glow of the camp-fire.

It was old Patience, the mare of Dakota Dan, the ranger. But where was the ranger, himself? Was he near—or had the mare been stolen from the corral at the Hidden Home?

Fierce and deadly were the scowls that clouded the savages' brows, as they turned their eyes from the dead comrade upon whose naked breast was the livid imprint of two hoof-marks, to the old mare drowsing unconcernedly by the camp-fire.

Not a savage would now venture within reach of her, but long poles and switches were cut, with which the resolute red-men began to "whale" the dormant tiger-tempers out of the old anatomy, with the view of substituting her for the litter when once subdued.

Octavia saw the cruel intention of her captors, and, springing to her feet, she ran up to the old mare and began caressing her in a manner that seemed perfectly congenial to the animal's—feminine sensibilities. The animal seemed to know that the girl was not an enemy to her master, and her docility toward the maiden was but the evidence of remarkable animal instinct.

Patience had become quite an object of admiration and curiosity in the camp of the settlers. All had bestowed some kindness upon her—had petted and fed her and indulged her in her peculiar, wonderful sagacity, or "female gumshin" as old Dan would have it. Octavia had ridden her, fed her and caressed her so often that the mare finally regarded her with as much respect and the same obedience as her master.

The maiden's heart had grown strong with hope since their arrival at the camp-fire. The presence of the old mare was evidence to her that Dan was not far away, and perhaps others of her friends were with him. But why the ranger had left his mare and gone off, she could not form the slightest conception. She inwardly hoped and prayed that nothing had befallen him.

The savages seemed to regard the animal's friendliness toward the maiden with some curiosity and doubt; but as none of them could speak English, they could elicit no information by questioning. So far, the conversation between captive and captors had been carried on by signs and gestures. At length, however, a warrior ventured to approach the animal. She made no offer of violence, and so the worst trouble was overcome and the mare was at once unhitched.

The chief of the party, a large fleshy fellow, arranged a cushion of several thicknesses of blankets on the animal's back, and, upon this, arranged his own two hundred pounds of adipose tissue, determined to make the rest of the journey in ease and comfort. Octavia was also given a seat upon the croup behind the savage dignitary and then the procession moved triumphantly forward, the dead warrior taking the maiden's place on the litter.

Patience yielded to savage authority with humble resignation, and ambled slowly away through the gloomy woods, with the sullen sounds of the crowd from side to side, and the fair captive weeping, more despondent than ever.

Octavia was satisfied that they were nearing the Indian village, or else her captors would have gone into camp at nightfall; and her fears now began to assume proportions entirely beyond the possibility of hope. Once within the Indian stronghold, she knew all chances of escape would be cut off.

While brooding over her sad and bitter fate, a low, prolonged, whistling sound suddenly stole through the night. Patience pricked up her ears in an instant, deliberately took the bit between her teeth, and like a deer shot away through the woods, with her double burden.

The savage, rocking and bounding more violently than ever, exerted his utmost strength to check the animal's flight, while Octavia clung to the red-skin with that desperation born of sudden terror. But the chief's efforts were as futile as a child's. Patience plunged on through the woods, her course apparently directed by that peculiar whistle still pulsing through the air.

But the chief was too deeply absorbed in his efforts to keep his equilibrium and gain control of the mare, to hear that whistle, else he might have been less reluctant to vacate his cushioned seat. But to give up a victory already within his grasp, would have been to call down upon his distinguished head a shower of derision from his followers, and so to preserve the dignity of his position, he held on to the reins and Patience held on to the bit.

Suddenly, the mare dashed into an open, moonlit glade and came to a dead halt.

"Down, red-skin; it's my turn to ride," said a voice, accompanied with the click of a gun-lock and the growl of a dog.

Dakota Dan, with a leveled rifle, confronted the chief.

A cry of joy burst from Octavia's lips and she leaped to the ground.

And a cry of rage burst from the savage's lips. Seeing his danger, the chief slid from

Patience's back on the opposite side and attempted to flee. But Humility was ready for his part in the drama, and springing forward, seized the Arapaho as he fled, midway between the nape of the neck and the heels, causing him to howl and dance on tiptoe in a giddy manner.

Dan turned to Octavia, but a yell of the approaching warriors would not admit of delay or explanations then between the rescuer and the rescued; and assisting the maiden to a seat on Patience's back again, the ranger beat a hasty retreat, calling Humility away from the unlucky chief, who was spinning around like a top in vain endeavors to get behind himself and choke off the dog.

The escape was not made a moment too soon. They were barely under cover of the woods ere the warriors burst into the glade of the outlaw.

For some time Dan led the way rapidly through the woods, speaking never a word. But as soon as he had assured himself that they were out of immediate danger, he stopped short and said:

"Safe, aren't you, little one?"

"I feel so, at least," replied the overjoyed maiden, "under your protection, Dan."

"Bless my soul, if that don't make me feel good!" the ranger exclaimed, as if to himself. "But, smoke of 'Jerusalem'!" he continued, "I didn't ole Patience, my mare here, play her part well?" She was a pestilence to that red-skin that essayed to prod her with his knife. I war deposited what I could see all. And I war mortal afraid she wouldn't give up at all and if it hadn't been for you she wouldn't. I wanted things to turn out just as they did. I've had my eye on 'em all afternoon, and see'd 'em totin' you along on that litter, and says I to Humility, 'They'd like a horse to put her on, and Humility barked, and then I know'd he thought so, too, and so I circled 'round and got ahead of you, and fixed up the game onto 'em. Patience is a splendid kickin', ain't she? Lord! if it'd a done your soul good to a see'd her flip that red-skin over Jordan to the happy huntin' ground! And I'll bet she creped away right smartly with you and that red-skin when she heard my whistle. Humph! greased lightnin' nowher with her, Octavy. And then come to the finishin'-touches, Humility, than displayed his activity and put in a tooth—a tooth well!"

"Oh! I don't know what to think! I am in a maze!" Bernice exclaimed.

"Better go right to bed, my dear; you'll feel better in the morning!" And after giving this advice, the old lawyer left the room, leaving Bernice alone, a prey to her own sad thoughts.

"Will I ever learn the truth?" the young girl cried, in anguish. "Now I am like one wandering in a fog. I do not know which way to turn."

Bernice arose and paced up and down the little room restlessly, her features sad with anxious thoughts.

"Yesterday I felt so sure that I had discovered the truth; but now, to-day, I am more in the dark than ever."

A slight tap at the door attracted Bernice's attention.

"Come in," she said.

The door opened, and Jimmie appeared. A hectic flush burned in her brown cheeks, and the red circles around her eyes told that she had been weeping.

For a moment the two girls looked at each other—a looker-on would have said, like two rivals measuring each other's strength.

"I beg your pardon for intruding, Miss," Jimmie said, a mournful cadence in her usually clear, ringing voice.

"I want to ask you a question," Jimmie said, hesitating.

"A question? Well, what is it?"

"Will you answer it?" Jimmie asked, eagerly.

"Will I answer it?" Bernice said, thoughtfully. "Is it an unpleasant question, then, that you have a doubt as to my answering it?"

"Yes, it is," cried Jimmie, abruptly. "Miss, you and I ain't friends. We can't be friends. There's something between us that won't let us be friends. It isn't that you're a lady, and that I'm only a poor, rough girl. There's something more than *that*. You know what it is as well as I do. Perhaps you wouldn't speak out so plain, but I can't help it. It's my nature, and the nature that Heaven has given us, it ain't of any use to try and keep down as long as it don't lead us into evil!"

"If we are not friends, we are not enemies, Jimmie," Bernice said, softly, speaking the girl's name for the first time.

"Don't speak that way, please, Miss," Jimmie exclaimed, tears glittering in her bright eyes.

"When you speak like that you take all the courage out of me. I didn't come here to be spoken kindly to. I came to talk bitter, to hate, to fight you—just like the men fight—if you don't give up what belongs to me. But when you speak soft it takes my anger all away."

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The Arm-Chair.

The average masculine stomach in this country craves liquor, and society must be revolutionized before a better state of things can exist.—Kate Field.

JUST about as true as that is the average feminine stomach which craves pickles and caramels. The stomach "craves" what *habit* has taught it to feed upon. If arsenic is its daily food for a season arsenic is its want. If laudanum is its companion for a year it is laudanum for life. If it could feed on aqua fortis harmlessly for a season it would "crave" aqua fortis. The stomach is a creature of habit, and because men are fools enough to "imbibe" upon the slightest provocation the taste for liquor grows insensibly into a want; but the masculine stomach naturally no more craves alcohol, save in exceptional hereditary cases, than it craves grindstones or hot coals. A little common sense wouldn't hurt Kate Field or any other field that prefers thistles to berries.

THE old sage, Ben Franklin, was a very practical philosopher indeed. His valuation of time, money and morals is attested in his "Poor Richard's Sayings," which is a perfect precipitate of sound sense and wholesome suggestions. And this old sage learned much of his wisdom as everybody else learns it, by a close study of human nature and experience. When he started out in life his sagacious mind detected the innate love of the humorous which lurked in almost every heart, and when he assumed charge of his brother's paper, *The New England Courant*, in 1722, his salutary countenance the announcement that his aim will be to "entertain the town with the most comical and diverting incidents of human life," and that there shall not be wanting a "greatful in terpersion of more serious morals, which may be drawn from the most ludicrous and odd parts of life."

Truly a very whimsical idea for a *news* paper, and yet, what was more likely to "take" with the people? Franklin carried through life this respect for the humorous. He was a great story-teller, he loved a joke, and was famous at rapartee which never hurt. His conversation was a *diversion* to every company. Though speaking ever so wisely and earnestly his benevolent face beamed with humor, and rarely did he fail to send a sunny smile rippling over the sea of faces that loved to gather around him.

To this genial nature, as well as to his wisdom, was due his great influence in affairs. He disarmed antagonism at the start, by his refusal to meet his antagonist as an enemy; and he succeeded where State craft of the most artful nature would have failed, utterly. He taught the European courts a lesson they were slow to adopt—the value of good humor, and to this day they look back at his service to America, in her time of greatest need, with astonishment and envy, evidently oblivious to the secret of that success—the respect which he inspired and the kindly feelings which he never failed to arouse.

In all of which there is a lesson for monarchs, ministers and men alike, and it is this—a genial temper and a kindly heart conquer where severity fails.

Sunshine Papers.

Physician, Heal Thyself.

A LARGE class of people in the world find an immense amount of enjoyment in demonstrating practically or theoretically this aphorism. It is a delight to their souls. It is a balm of Gilead to their consciences. It puts a quietus upon all the advice that superior experience, age, or goodness, would give them. They imbue their lives and conversations with the spirit of it. They find in it the essence of bliss, inasmuch as it maintains them upon the same level of morality and piety with other people. In fact, to many persons, "Physician, heal thyself," is a substantive for salvation!

The essential point concerning this delightful remark, and the one that so constitutes it a favorite of humanity's, is that one need never feel its personality. It can be used impudently, exultantly, sneeringly, advisory, beseechingly, to other people without any self-disparagement; because you see, a comparison may not be instituted until others are perfect; and that day is so slow of approach that the self-righteous persons are never started out of the serenity with which they regard themselves quite as good as their neighbors, and continue to find flaws in the character of their friends that afford them opportunity to transfix those miserable individuals with the point of the good weapon, "Physician, heal thyself."

Did ever a journal attempt to unearth and correct some abuse in politics, laws, or government, but type by the cargo and printer's ink by the loadswere hurled at that journal in sneers, invectives, innuendoes, open accusations, all impregnated with the words or spirit of the sarcastic adoration that heads this article?

Did ever a zealous reformer take the platform to lead onward some great movement, to urge some needed change in moral, faith, or custom, to paint the horrors of some maelstrom of evil habits and guide to serene seas of steady and honorable career, but a host pressed about him blazoning forth some discovered moral, or mental, or physical infirmity, and sounding the crucifixion cry of "Physician, heal thyself?"

Did ever an author give to the world some grand production upon which he has spent weary days and nights writing, and correcting, and rewriting, and fashioning with a creator's worshipfulness for its creature into perfect symmetry, launching it upon the sea of public opinion with feelings of duty, responsibility, and awe, but his home was invaded by the curious eyes of the world, his family relations criticised, his character ruthlessly dissected, his private life laid bare by merciless hands, his religious instincts analyzed by cold-

blooded theologians, and, some flaws discerned by these carping critics, his work hurled back at his feet by multitudes who bid him better himself!

Was there ever a preacher in whom divine elements combined with human since the days when God himself walked through the olive groves and along the shores of Palestine? Not! Then no need to ask was there ever a preacher who has not been forced to bear as his heaviest burden the wounds made by the shafts of that bitter-tipped arrow, "Look at home." Even the lowly Nazarene, in whom was found no guile, was crucified, and might not escape a like fate even in the nineteenth century!

Miss Stupid sneers at Miss Studious, "What if she has a good education, that makes her no better than other folks; she had much better have let her books go and associated with her neighbors, and learned how to cook decently for her father. She never has a bit of pie for the poor man"—quite oblivious to the fact that education has taught Miss Studious that pie is an unwholesome condiment, but how to make the most nutritious and tempting delicacies in the world for her sick neighbors, whom she never fails to visit and care for tenderly. Mr. Knowall does not believe in going to church; he knows better than any clergyman can tell him, how to live; ministers are a sanctimonious, conceited set; besides, he is as good as they are; they are all too grave or too gay, too illiterate or too learned, too plain or too showy, too parsimonious or too extravagant, too reserved or too free, too inexperienced or too sharp, too hypocritical or too indiscreet, to measure up to his ideal of a minister; he is better off at home. Mr. Banker thinks he may as well keep horses to bat upon, as for Deacon Genial to keep fast horses to drive. Mrs. Showy, who spends most of her husband's earnings in dress, thinks Mrs. Wealthy had better discard silk dresses, and sell her watch and chain, before she lectures women upon the evils of dress. Mr. Neversober observes that people better leave off using wine in church services before they talk to him of brandy.

So it is the world through! There always will be those who will cry, "Physician, heal thyself," and go on in their own way, thinking the commissions of others will rectify their own omissions.

Suppose in future the people who are always seeing the sins of others should resolve to accept whatever is beautiful and pure as such, for its own sake, remembering that on the surface of the foul and fetid ditch water may grow, and bud, and bloom, the spotless and fragrant lily; should admire and emulate every element of good in every character; should seek to rest their own claims to respect and honor upon their own constant endeavors to do well, and not upon the fact that some one else is no better; and we all should forget that any one has need of healing but just our self-righteous selves.

A PARSON'S DAUGHTER.

MY DARWINISM.

PIGS. Individuals who are forever poking their noses into the mire of scandals of social life, who gloat over the quantity of dirt they wallow in, for the evidence given in many a divorce case is dirt of the worst kind. Few, if any of us would wish to allow our young folks to play with a pig and use his pen for a play ground. Sometimes I think the court-room is more like a pig's pen, for such dirt, mire, and filth pervade it—in the words given in much of the evidence—as to make a person shudder for the safety of the young. What is the need of parading all this evidence in the daily press? It does more harm than good; it panders to a sickly appetite. Some one has said that the eyes of the hog are so situated in the head that it can never look upwards, but must keep its eyes continually on the ground. Some of these human pigs appear to contemplate only what is earthly. The same author remarks that, if the animal was to be placed on its back, it would be struck motionless by the sight of the sun, so unaccustomed is it to the splendor. It's a pity some of these pigs in human form cannot be treated the same way. Their deeds and words will not bear to have much virtuous light shed upon them.

SNAKES. They fascinate you with the glitter of their eyes, and you scarcely ever dream that they are alluring you to destruction. They come asking you to take shares in some lottery, which turns out all blanks; to invest in some speculation that proves to be a bubble—to drink, gamble and swear, persuading you, with the basest of lies, that such things are manly. They propose some scheme in which the profits will be "millions," and you have only to borrow a thousand from your employer's drawer, to be paid back when the fortune shall be yours. The coil of the snake is around you; you are too fast in its power to escape; you steal the funds; you never get even the thousand back, and you are branded as an embezzler. Beware of these snakes! Shut them as you would the slimy ones they so much resemble.

PUPPIES. Not very uncommon animals and not of much use, except to hold an eye-glass to their eyes and stare all modest folks out of countenance. They are good signs for tailors and I believe they consider themselves good-looking and fascinating. Poor, self-deceived creatures! How can they imagine that inane looks are beautiful or stupid, or that dull conversations are fascinating. They are the loungers around church-doors; they come and go at the word of command from their rich friends; they bow and cringe at the nod of the extravagantly dressed and are about as welcome as the dirt that is daily swept up in the streets. Brother Tom declares the best way to deal with such creatures, is to fire out-jacks at them until they leave the premises. Tom is right for once in his life.

CATS. Soft paws but sharp claws come slyly into your house to hear what is going on, and, if detected, look as guilty as a felon who has stolen bread or meat; they purr so softly and gently that you would think them the sweetest pussies ever placed on earth—so kind, so good, so gentle, so pleasant and exceedingly so, as long as you praise what they do and sympathize with their views, but you act just the contrary way, and, oh my! won't they show their teeth and won't they scratch! We cannot chase them out with the broom although we may want to do so ever so much. The usages of good society command us to keep our tempers. Human cats go poking into cupboards, prying into pantries and mousing into drawers to discover if they cannot find something to talk about and comment upon. It's hard to keep them still; they are extremely stealthy and before you have time to lock up one closet they are into another, until we are inclined to throw ceremony to the winds and break every law of etiquette by informing them that their room is better than their company, and their absence will give us more pleasure than their presence. That is about the easiest thing I can do, but I avoid it as much as possible.

Married or single? Married, at least you would think I was if you were in my state. Drygoods' and milliners' bills coming in prevent

these poke-their-noses-into-every-body-else's business—but their own have neither use nor ornament to recommend them.

APES. Those silly individuals who are ever mimicking the dress and manners of others; who think, because Mrs. Suchandso does this, or dresses in that, they must do the same. Originality is not in the line at all. We call ourselves republicans, and sneer at royalty a great deal, but, you take my word for it, if Queen Victoria was to break a limb to-morrow—bless her soul, I hope she will not—and have to go on crutches, as soon as the news were telegraphed to this country there would be a greater demand for crutches than could be supplied, for crutches, you see, would be fashionable, and those who ape their superiors, would not mind breaking a limb "to be as great as Queen Victoria." We fear that we have a crushionship with animals, considering how many there are who take after the ape.

EVE LAWLESS.

These poke-their-noses-into-every-body-else's business—but their own have neither use nor ornament to recommend them.

me from forgetting the fact for any length of time.

Is your breathing difficult? I should say it was. Dreadful hard work when a fellow don't have any pay for it. Always did consider it laborious, but had to stand it.

Have you a cough? No; but my wife accuses me of having symptoms of snoring at night—not very vociferous, but something like a steamboat climbing a hill, hunting for water; something like I had snuffed a comforter down my throat and couldn't swallow it. When she hits me over the head with a pillow, I invariably wake up, but as to snoring, I don't believe word of it. She says I could hear myself snore half a mile away, which is false. I am sure that I don't do two cents' worth of snoring in a year.

Have you pain in striking your chest? No; I have thoroughly tested that matter. I have had loaded wagons run over me and then got up and licked the driver; I have pulled a mule's tail, and then was able to insist that I was my own aunt's grandmother.

Have you an appetite? Yes, a very bad one—the worst appetite in this country. I never lose it. The more I eat, the more I want to eat. When I go to a hotel, I am registered as Whitehorn and appetite. Hungry is my normal condition. I can't eat much, oh no.

Is your voice weak? Moderately so, only. I can talk the hat off a man's head at thirty paces. When I converse with a deaf man, he puts his trumpet in his coat-pocket. When a boy at school, the teacher always had to tickle me for whispering too loud, but I couldn't help it.

Do you take cold easily? As easily as possible.

Do you have fever? Yes, I have severe attacks of the spring fever, which frequently confine me to my bed, accompanied by thirst for lemonade with ice in it.

Have you any pulmonary diseases? Nary nulmon.

Have you any difficulty in swallowing? The only trouble in that direction is in getting enough to swallow.

How is your general health? Pretty good, I thank you; how is yours?

What time do you rise? Just about the time I get up; never after.

Is your sleep sound? I never sounded it, but am under the impression that it is.

Do you use any stimulants? Nary stim!

Does talking weaken you? Yes, if my wife does the talking, it does.

How did you come by consumption? It was a legacy of my wife's uncle.

How old were your parents when they died? Older than they ever were in their lives.

What exercise do you take? I talk with my mother-in-law three times a day; figure up how much I ain't worth once a day regular; read the morning paper; put on a clean shirt; keep one eye on my neighbor; show down the way out of the house, besides pulling off my boots when I go to bed.

What other afflictions? None except rheumatism, erysipelas, distemper, fever-and-ague, epizootic, gapes, chicken cholera, bunions, tarts, hydrocephalus, spavin, and murrain.

(Signed) WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

Woman's World.

JOTTINGS ON THE STREET.

PASSING up and down Broadway one sees a thousand things "on the wear," which are not only indicative of what is style, but are really bright revelations of taste and art. Some of the dresses we meet in use so differ from those we see in the windows that we wonder where the wearers are for those showstuffs.

The *flachs*, we see, are now established in popular favor. They are made of all sorts of fabrics, and in many different fashions. The "Adelaide" *flachs* is exceedingly nobby for a young lady. This style should be made of *crepe de chine*, and richly garnished with Valenciennes lace, or fringe. The pattern is large, and hence forms quite a considerable item to the dress. The "Jacket *flachs*" resembles a pretty house *basque*. This graceful and fashionable garment adds wonderfully to the elegance of a mode toilet. The capa part of this *flachs* hangs easily from the shoulders, and extends to the bottom of the waist.

I am fearful, however, he will never come, for he must be generous, noble, industrious, and with an affectionate son and brother; and most of the young men now-a-days are quite different, at least so brother says, and he ought to know, for he's a young man.

Any how, I hope there'll be a nice one for me when I am ready; and if he'll only be really good, I know I couldn't help loving him. And I'll promise to make him as good a wife as I can and I'll try ever so hard.

Foolscap Papers.

Medical.

I LATELY received the following programme of questions from a New York doctor of consumption, with the request to write the answers to them. I have complied with his request, to the best of my knowledge:

What is your age? Well, I am twice as old as I used to be, maybe three times as old if I would figure it down close enough. I would have been older but I always lived an upright life, and so prolonged my days. My years will average twelve months to the year straight through. My grandfather is older than I am.

What is your height? Astronomers have taken observations at various times, and during the recent transit of Venus, and find my head, if I stand on a level with the earth, is within ninety-two million miles of the sun—lacking five feet, eight inches. I have been known to throw a shadow one hundred feet when I wasn't in the best of health, and then not strain myself. I would have been longer, but the fact is I am short so much of the time it has impeded my growth.

What is your occupation? Boarder. My principal pursuit is something 'o' eat. Besides, I think I work harder than any man living to see if I can't get along without working at all. It is killing work, too, very straining on my constitution.

What is your weight? I have been said to be worth my weight in gold; taking it pound for pound, I am worth one hundred and fifty pounds sterling: after dinner two hundred. These facts and figures taken from the *scale*. I am light complexioned, and therefore not so heavy as I should be otherwise.

Color of hair? My last wig is black; the other one was of an auburn color.

What is the measure of your chest? A clothes-line will go clear around me and a little to spare. I can go through a four foot door and touch one side of it without much squeezing.

Are you easily tired? Indeed I am; you wouldn't believe it. I always was; the least thing tires me out. I can get tired quicker than any man living without any trouble at all; there's no art in that for me. That is about the easiest thing I can do, but I avoid it as much as possible.

Married or single? Married, at least you would think I was if you were in my state. Drygoods' and milliners' bills coming in prevent

these poking-their-noses-into-every-body-else's business—but their own have neither use nor ornament to recommend them.

me from forgetting the fact for any length of time.

Is your breathing difficult? I should say it was. Dreadful hard work when a fellow don't have any pay for it. Always did consider it laborious, but had to stand it.

Have you a cough? No; but my wife accuses me of having symptoms of snoring at night—not very vociferous, but something like a steamboat climbing a hill, hunting for water; something like I had snuffed a comforter down my throat and couldn't swallow it. When she hits me over the head with a pillow, I invariably wake up, but as to snoring, I don't believe word of it. She says I could hear myself snore half a mile away, which

BIRDLINGS.

BY FRANK M. IMBIE.

In Fancy's studio one bright nook
Is lit by a picture rare and sweet—
True limned, with cunning imagery,
For the young to touch and hear, restless feet.
Two upward eyes, all wonder-right,
By pristine fires of genius fed:
Two scarlet lips trill the quaint words:
"Have the birds gone up-stairs to bed?"

Doubtless, with infant ken it went
Step by step the starlit stair;
And saw the wee cloud-hammock fling
Its rose-tinged curtains on the air:
Then, when some dappled, dainty cloud
Went eddying across the sapphire dome,
It seemed the maned bird had come
Her nestlings in their sky-girt home,

With a slight, soft, airy, flilled breeze,
Ah, there surely were the fir lululay!
The star eyes looking softly down
Were the baby birds so cunning, shy.
Peering through misty drapery
Till a kindred gleam in the child-eyes shone
As the infant querist drifted off,
To visit, in dreams, this vision-home.

Dear child-teachers! what thoughts they wake;
When you wander, in fancy through labyrinths
With birdicas, stars and flowers rife!
Oh, touch again some old-time strain;
Some memory-gem, without alloy:
Prison our earth-clasped hearts awhile
Till we catch one note of vanished joy!

A Model Mother-in-Law.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

MRS. SYMES SYMINGTON smoothed down the nap of her jetty velvet polonaise with her pretty, white, plump hand, on the forefinger of which sparkled a cluster diamond ring, on the third finger of which clung a plain, heavy marriage-ring.

She was a plump, rosy little lady, not as tall by head as the handsome young fellow who called her "mother," and in whom her whole heart's affections were centered, and to whom she was, at this present moment, administering as severe a reproof as she ever had found occasion to do.

Naughty, headstrong Cleve listened very respectfully, as he leaned his head on his hand and his elbow on the mantelpiece; listened with an air that demonstrated the perfect uselessness of the arguments his lady-mother advanced.

Then, when she paused in triumphant breathlessness—breathless because of her long sentences with no punctuation marks, and triumphant, because she certainly accepted Cleve's silence as the consent she aspired to securing; after all this, Cleve smiled—so sweetly, so coolly, right in her face.

"But I shall marry little Birdie Lorne, mamma mine—that is, if she will have me. Now, don't frown so—you look so much prettier when you smile and blush, little mother. Tell me to propose to my little sunny-haired girl and bring her here for the maternal blessing."

He leaned his handsome head toward Mrs. Symington, and looked at her in such a proudly coaxing way that in her fond heart she wondered how any woman could resist him. Then—shook her head, until the diamonds in her ears sent their coruscations far and near.

"How can I, Cleve, when I am morally sure Miss Lorne wants your money! A hundred thousand dollars isn't to be secured every day; and to marry for money is to be perfectly miserable. I married for money, Cleve, and you know the life I led until your father died. You are my only comfort—don't hurt me by bringing home a wife who will only endure us for the sake of what we can give her."

Evidently she had forgotten her mental decision that no girl with a human heart could resist her boy's handsome face; and certainly it was very unlike the proud, self-assured Mrs. Symington to underrate her own importance so tremendously. But then, even the richest, proudest, haughtiest people have their "other side" that only a few friends know; and this was Mrs. Symington's "other side."

She watched Cleve's face anxiously, but there was no sign of change of views in the gay, debonair face, with the contradicting eyes so grave and sternly decided.

"You mistake Birdie altogether, mother dear. How can it be possible she wants me for my money when lots of other fellows are after her? She is quite an heiress in her own right—forty or fifty thousand."

Mrs. Symington opened her bright, black eyes.

"O-h! is that the case? Well—"

Her altered tone, her hesitating words, so delightfully emphasized, were enough for Cleve. He caught her up in his arms, regardless of her elegant toilet, and kissed her until her face was as scarlet as a girl's.

"Cleve! aren't you ashamed of yourself! Put me down, this minute, or—or—you shan't marry Bird—"

He dropped her like a hot potato.

"You're down, mother! and in just one hour prepare to see my little darling—all blushed, and dimples, and smiles, and sweetness."

He went out rather hurriedly, caught his hat from the rack and hailed a passing car that would speed him on his mission.

Mrs. Symington watched him between the plume-colored damask curtains, her eyes kindling with pleasurable, pardonable pride.

"The dear boy! he wants me to think I settled the matter he arranged long ago! Of course he would have married her, anyway, but just to think how splendidly he has behaved to me!"

And something very like the diamonds in her ears glittered in her fond mother eyes as she turned away.

A delightful little octagonal room, hung with the exact shade of dainty pink silk that was most becoming to Birdie Lorne's fair complexion; a pink carpet that covered the floor in an unbroken expanse of velvet; divans, chairs, ottomans and cushions upholstered in pink and ebony; with little lace tides, and snowy, zephyr mats scattered, gracefully around; with elegantly-designed and executed afghans on the ottomans and sofas; with lace curtains and pink satin drapery; with the white walls hung with small, rare paintings, with statuettes on pedestals in every available niche.

A charming, girlishly-ordered room, that opened from the back drawing-room by one door and into the conservatory by another; a place where tears and trouble ought never to have come, and the sight of both of which uncanny visitors made Cleve Symington pause a second on the threshold, as he caught a glimpse of a snowy head buried in two tiny fair hands, and heard the unmistakable sob that shook the little white-robbed figure crouching in a heap beside a low hassock.

He only hesitated a second, then, with a look of tenderest love and pity and sympathy, crossed the room to her side.

"Birdie! not crying so pitifully! Can I sympathize or do I intrude?"

She sprung up in a sweet, shy surprise, her face all tear-flushed, her eyes as bright as dew-drops.

She was one of those heaven-favored mortals that weeping beauties; she never was guilty of a red nose, or swollen eyes, or—Cupid forgive the vulgarity—the snuffles. She only looked fresher, and fairer, and so pitiful, and Cleve's arms fairly ached to take her to his heart and kiss her tears away. And he would, he vowed, rapturously inside of five minutes.

She took her handkerchief from her pocket—a little linen affair, white and fragrant, and essayed to smile as she wiped the tears from her lashes.

"I am afraid I appear very childish, Mr. Symington—but when I think—when it is all gone—"

Her exquisite mouth quivered again, but she checked the rebellious tears bravely.

"I am as poor as a church-mouse to wonder where 'everything was gone,' or if Cleve 'went out, actually went out every day' for exercise, pleasure, or to earn his living. Only, the impression received by her was just the one Mrs. Symington intended to convey.

"Poor fellow! Is—he well?"

She said it so shyly, so sweetly.

"Oh, yes, perfectly well, and as brave as a lion; only—forgive me, dear—only hopelessly cast down, on your account. I am his mother, and to you, the only girl he ever loved, I say—he loves you with an affection that will last forever."

Birdie blushed now—as much in surprise as anything else; and involuntarily she glanced at the plain, unfashionable attire.

"You understand? We have been as unlucky as yourself, Miss Lorne. Everything is gone, and Cleve goes out—actually goes out every day."

A little exclamation of amaze met her vague remarks; and Birdie never stopped to wonder where "everything was gone," or if Cleve "went out, actually went out every day" for exercise, pleasure, or to earn his living. Only, the impression received by her was just the one Mrs. Symington intended to convey.

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Birdie blushed violently, then lifted her frank eyes.

"I will ask him if he thinks I am worthy.

Come, dear Mrs. Symington."

In the cheerful room she sat down, with happy, grateful tears in her eyes, while Mrs. Symington brought pencil and paper, with a curious twitch of her mouth that meant smiles or tears—either or both.

"He must have stayed over noon, dear.

But you just write what you please, and leave it. He will be so happy when he gets it. He'll come to see you at once, I know. Don't forget your address."

So Birdie poured out her whole heart—completely conquered now; and sealed the letter to Cleve Symington.

Then she kissed the mother over and over.

"I am so thankful we met so strangely; and I am so glad you live in this poor, plain little place—I love you better for it, I know. And when my bills are all paid, for the music I teach, at the end of the quarter, why—why, if Cleve will want me so soon, we'll get pleasure rooms, and fix them so cozy, and we'll be so happy!"

She spoke gently, but with a proud ring to her voice; and Cleve reeled under the sharp, sudden blow. He clenched her hands so tightly that her rings cut in the tender flesh, but she only compressed her lips and made no sign of how he hurt her.

"But, Birdie," and there was such agony in his voice that her own heart quailed a second, "Birdie—don't speak of obligations to the man who loves you as I do! speak as if you knew you would grace a queen's throne, as you would. Birdie! Birdie! don't be so cruel to me!"

Her lips quivered, and her eyes overflowed suddenly.

"You mean what you say, my friend, I know. Or, rather, you think you mean it, which is the same to me, since I cannot accept it. But, you are only pitiful and kind, and sympathetic, and the sight of my tears and grief has touched your great heart. That is all."

She drew her hands away from his, softly.

"It is not all! I love you—"

Then, something in her imperious face made him suddenly desist, and by the way she looked and acted, Cleve Symington knew she was desperately in earnest—she would not marry him, because she was so proud—so proud.

And he went sadly away, feeling numb and stupefied, as he walked home in a strange, dazed way that his fond mother saw, from her peeping-place between the curtains; and her own face lost all its matronly bloom as Cleve came in, whiter than death itself, and himself on the sofa.

Then, when he had told her, between spasms of pain that forced him to lie speechless, the rosy flush crept softly back, and into the eyes fairly radiated a happy hopeful light.

"Try to beat it my boy," she said, gently. "You have proved what a noble woman she is, if nothing more."

Then she went out, smiling to herself.

A plain, large room, on the second-story front of a tenement on Sixth avenue, that bore evidences of very recent furnishing, in the new, cheap rag-carpet on the floor, the paper-shades at the windows, the coarse, homely chairs and table, the little coal cooking-stove, on which several flat-irons were heating.

Before the small, mahogany-framed looking-glass that hung between the windows, Mrs. Symington was tying her bonnet-strings—narrow black strings to a black straw bonnet, trimmed with Quaker plainness—that compared suitably with her black alpaca dress and dull plaid blanket-shawl. She smiled at her reflection, then glanced down at her unaccustomed toilet.

"I think I shall be successful—I will be successful, for my boy's sake. The sight of his patient, pale face will inspire me to any degree, and if Miss Lorne is the woman I take her to be, she will prove it before an hour passes over our heads."

She nodded emphatically several times, then looked at the clock on the mantel-shelf.

"Since her descent into poverty—gentle, ladylike poverty, however—I learn she passes this house every day at twelve o'clock, and takes her dinner at the restaurant several doors below; so if I intend to meet her I had better be going."

She locked the door, put the key in her pocket, and went down the stairs into the street—exactly on time; for a slight, graceful figure, clad in gray Allen's twill, passed quietly by, and into the restaurant.

She knew it was Birdie Lorne, as well as Cleve would have known it, although she had never seen her before; and she walked calmly into the restaurant, and took a seat at the same table with the pretty, high-bred girl.

The saloon was nearly full, and Mrs. Symington was glad of it; she could converse all the better with this prospective daughter-in-law of hers; and, naturally, as sensible women, the two formed a speaking acquaintance while waiting for stews.

All at once, as if suddenly impressed with the idea, Mrs. Symington looked curiously in Birdie's face.

"I beg pardon—but are you not Miss Lorne? I am quite sure you must be the young lady my son speaks about so often."

There was something so kindly genial in the air that Birdie did not resent it.

"Your son? I certainly am Miss Lorne; but you have the advantage of me."

"I am Cleve Symington's mother, dear. There, forgive me, but you see I know all about it. I am so thankful to have met you, quite providentially."

Birdie blushed now—as much in surprise as anything else; and involuntarily she glanced at the plain, unfashionable attire.

"You understand? We have been as unlucky as yourself, Miss Lorne. Everything is gone, and Cleve goes out—actually goes out every day."

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"Victoria!"
The voice again—the same low, sweet, clear voice from beneath their feet!

The faces of both listeners turned white with fear.

The voice from the grave came up on the still summer air solemn and sweet, once more.

"From death, one has been saved by the other; and in the days to come, one shall perish through the other. Barbara, be warned! Victoria, beware!"

It ceased. A blackbird perched on an overhanging branch, set up its chirping song, and the voice of Mademoiselle Jeannette was heard in the distance, crying out for Miss Vivian. It broke the spell of terror, and both children fled from the spot.

"Oh Barbara! What was that?" cried Vivian, her very lips white with fear.

"I don't know," said Barbara, trying to hide her own terror. "It came from the grave. It couldn't be the dead nun could it? Is that place haunted?"

"No—yes—I don't know! I think Tom said there was a ghost seen there. Don't tell Jeannette; she will only laugh at us. But I will never go there as long as I live!"

"What made you stay away so long, Mademoiselle Vivian? Your grandmother was afraid you were lost again."

"Let us hurry, then. I want grandmamma to see you, Barbara; so make haste."

The great hall-door of the old mansion was wide open as they came near, and Lady Agnes herself stood in the hall, talking to the colonel and Mr. Sweet; Vivian ran breathlessly in, followed by Barbara, who glanced around, and up the sweeping staircase, with its gilded balustrade, in grand, careless surprise.

"Here is Barbara, grandmamma!—here is Barbara!" was Vivian's cry, as she rushed in. "I knew she would come."

"Barbara is the best and bravest little girl in the world!" said Lady Agnes glancing curiously at the bright, fearless face and holding out two jeweled tapered fingers. "I am glad to see Barbara here, and thank her for what she has done, with all my heart."

Mr. Sweet, standing near, with his pleasant smile on his face, stepped forward, hat in hand.

"Good afternoon, my lady. Good afternoon, Miss Victoria. Our little Barbara will have cause to bless the day that has brought her such noble friends."

With a tune on his lips, and the smile deepening inexplicably, he went out into the great portico, down the broad stone steps guarded by two crouching lions, and along the great avenue, shading off the golden sunshine with its waving trees. Under one of them he paused, with his hat still in his hand, the sunlight sifted through the trees, making his jewelry and his yellow hair flash back its radiance, and looked around. The grand old mansion, the sweeping vista of park and lawn, and terrace and shrubbery, and glade and woodland, mimic lake and radiant rose-garden, Swiss farmhouse and ruined convent, all spread out before him, bathed in the glory of the bright September sun. The tune died away, and the smile changed to an exultant laugh.

"And to think!" said Mr. Sweet, turning away, "that one day all this shall be mine!"

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MAY QUEEN.

SUCH a morning as that first of May was! Had the good people of Cliftonlea sent up an express order to the clerk of the weather to manufacture them the fairest day he could possibly turn out, they could not have had a more perfectly unexceptionable one than that. Sun and sky were so radiantly bright, they fairly made you wonder to think of them. Ceylon's spicy breezes could not have been warmer or spicier than that blowing over Cliftonlea common. The grass and the trees were as green as in many other parts of England, they would have been in July. The cathedral bells were ringing, until they threatened to crack and go mad with joy; and as for the birds, they were singing at such a rate, that they fairly overtopped the bells, and had been hard and fast at it since five o'clock. All the town, *en grande tenue*, were hurrying, with eager anticipation, toward the common—great square, carpeted with the greenest possible grass, be-sprinkled with pink and white daisies, and shaded by tall English poplars—where the Cliftonlea brass band was already, banging away at the "May Queen." All business was suspended; for May Day had been kept, from time immemorial, a holiday, and the lady of Castle Cliff always encouraged it, by ordering her agents to furnish a public dinner, and supper, and no end of ale, on each anniversary.

Then, besides the feasting and drinking, there was the band and dancing for the young people, until the small hours, if they choose.

And so it was no wonder that May Day was looked for months before it came, and was the talk months afterward; and that numberless matches were made there, and that the May Queen was the belle all the succeeding year, and the envy of all the young ladies of the town.

The cathedral-bells had just begun to chime forth the national anthem; the crowd of town-folk kept pouring in a long stream through High street toward the common, when a slight sensation was created by the appearance of two young men, to whom the women courtesied and the men took off their hats. Both bore the unmistakable stamp of gentleness, and there was an indefinable something—an indescribable air—about them, that told plainer than words they were not of the honest burghers among whom they walked. One of these, upon whom the cares of life and a green shooting-jacket appeared to sit easily, was remarkable for his stature—being, like Saul, the son of Kish, above the heads of his fellow-men—with the proportions of a grenadier, and the thews and sinews of an athlete. On an exuberant crop of short, crisp, black curls, jauntily sat a blue Scotch bonnet, with a tall feather. On the Herculean form was the green hunting-jacket, tightened round the waist with a leather belt, and to his knees came a pair of tall Wellington boots. This off-hand style of costume suited the wearer to perfection, which is as good as saying his figure was admirable; and suited, too, the laughing black eyes and dashing air generally. A mustache, thick and black, became well the sunburnt and not very handsome face; and he held his head up, and talked and laughed in a voice sonorous and clear, not to say loud as bugle-blast.

The young giant's companion was not at all like him—nothing near so tall, though still somewhat above the usual height, and much more slender of figure—but then he had such a figure! One of those masculine faces, to which the adjective beautiful can be applied, and yet remain intensely masculine. A light summer straw-hat sat on the fair brown hair, and shaded the broad, pale brow—the dreamy brow of a poet or a painter—large blue eyes, so darkly blue that at first you would be apt to mistake them for black, shaded as they were by girl-like, long, sweeping lashes—wonderful

eyes, in whose clear, calm depths spoke a deathless energy, fiery passion, amid all their calm, and a fascination that his twenty-four years of life had proved to their owner, few could ever resist. The clear, pale complexion, the straight, delicate features, what a peculiarity of his race, and known to many in London and Sussex as the "Cliffe face." His dress was the most faultless of morning costumes, and a striking contrast to the easy style of his companion's with whom he walked arm-in-arm; patting, now and then, with the other hand, which was gloved, the head of a great Canadian wolf-hound trotting by his side. Both young gentlemen were smoking; but the tall wearer of the green jacket was carrying his cigar between his finger and thumb, and was holding forth volubly.

"Of course they will have a May Queen!

They always have had in Cliftonlea, from time

memorial; and I believe the thing is men-

tioned in Magna Charta. If you had not been

such a heathen, Cliffe, roaming all your life

in foreign parts, you would have known about it before this. Ah! how often have I danced on

the green with the May Queen, when I was a

naive little shaver in roundabouts; and what

pretty little things those May Queens were!

If you only keep your eye skinned to

day, you will see some of the best-looking girls

you ever saw in your life."

"I don't believe it."

"Seeing is believing, and you just hold on.

The last time I was here, Barbara Black was

the May Queen; and what a girl that was, to

be sure! Such eyes; such hair; such an ankle;

such an instep; such a figure; such a face!

Just the sort of thing you painting fellows al-

ways go mad about. I believe I was half in

love with her at the time, if I don't greatly

mistake."

"I don't doubt it in the least. It's a way

you have," said his companion, whose low, re-

fined tones contrasted forcibly with the vigor-

ous voice of the other. "How long ago is

that?"

"Four years, precisely."

"Then that's my word for it, Barbara Black

is home as a hedge-fence by this time. Pret-

ty children always grow up ugly, and vice

versa."

"Perhaps so," said the giant in the green jacket, and tightening his belt. "Well, it may be true enough as a general rule; for I was un-

commonly ugly when a child, and look at me now!

But I'll swear Barbara is an exception; for she is the prettiest girl I ever saw in my life—except one. Only to think, being four years absent from a place, and then not to find

in the least changed when you come back."

"Isn't it? I know so little of Cliftonlea that its good people might throw their houses out of the windows, without my being anything the wiser. What a confounded din that band makes! and what a crowd there is! I hate

crowds!"

"They'll make way for us," said the young giant; and, true to his prediction, the dense mob encircling the common parted respectfully to let the two young men through. "Look there, Cliffe, that's the May-pole, and that flower-wreathed seat underneath is the queen's throne, God bless her! See that long arch of green boughs and flowers; that's the way her majesty will come. And just look at this living sea of eager eyes and faces! You might make a picture of all this, Sir Artist."

"And make my fortune at the exhibition.

"It's a good notion, and I may try it some time when I have time. Who is to be the May Queen this year?"

"Can't say. There she comes herself!"

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"It's a good notion, and I may try it some time when I have time. Who is to be the May Queen this year?"

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"It's a good notion, and I may try it some time when I have time. Who is to be the May Queen this year?"

"Can't say. There she comes herself!"

"I give you my word to attempt no escape," said Vane, adding hurriedly, as the officer signaled a carriage: "Sir Rupert Archer, let me present a true friend of mine, Mr. Prescott. I need not ask if you two will see me through the result."

Brief recognitions were exchanged, Sir Rupert spoke a word to the merchant, who was turning away, and followed into the carriage. The officer mounted beside the driver, and the vehicle rolled away.

"You ask for particulars," said the baronet, on the way. "Is it possible you never heard? Your father was murdered, shot dead, at midnight of that New Year's eve you were last at Thornhurst. Can you account for yourself at that time, Vane?"

At midnight! Like a vivid picture the remembrance of that time rose up in his mind, the avenue gates, the fitful moonlight upon the snow, the tall dark-robed female form, the dull desperation in his heart, the clear, vibrating strokes as they clef the air!

"I can account for myself, but, oh! Sir Rupert, that will not give me back my father." His voice broke, the silent pressure of his friend's hand was better sympathy than words.

"Your first duty is to yourself now," said the baronet, after a moment. "You will be taken on and probably have a hearing, immediately after your arrival. Let me secure your proof and escape a trial if possible. Can you prove an alibi?"

"By Miss Montrose. I met her at the gates as I went out that night, and we stood there together as the clock struck midnight. I left her there when I ran, as I had to do to catch the train."

"Of course you saw others immediately afterward," said Sir Rupert, anxiously. "Some one on the way, at least the people at the station?"

"Not one; I had no time. I sprang to the platform after the cars were in motion. Miss Montrose was the last person of all my old acquaintances I ever saw until this day. I did not even get the papers for months afterward. I never heard one word from home—my own faults, but I had an object."

A cold fear stole over the baronet. His friend's lips hung on the testimony of Miss Montrose, and Miss Montrose had disappeared twelve hours following that meeting, almost as suddenly, almost as mysteriously, and later quite as wholly, as Vane himself.

The merchant found Dare awaiting him on his return.

"That news this afternoon quite startled me," he said, apologetically. "Is it a positive fact that Vane has 'ventured back?' I can scarcely credit it in my own cool senses."

"Back and taken already! He was arrested at the depot, and will be taken on to-morrow. If facts were not so strong against him, I could almost believe him innocent."

"You forgot how skilled in deception he is. I haven't a doubt of his guilt or a hope of the result, but it's a terrible calamity that he should turn up. I want to speak of the other matter, however—regarding Nora. The events of this day must change our plans materially."

"You will be in luck if you carry them out, Dare. Two fortunes that will aggregate a million. The diamond mine affair is an unparalleled streak of fortune. It will not make your undertaking any the easier, I predict."

"It shall not have the opportunity of making it harder. We must hasten matters. Nora must not hear a breath of that or of Vane's return until she is my wife. I shall go down to Thornhurst to-morrow, Mr. Grahame, before either the papers or any private hint has reached her. You must come along and avow yourself unconditionally in my favor. There must be no hesitation now, on your part or on mine, and no time lost in gaining our point. I shall drop a note to Reverend Grattis to-night to join us at the village within the next three days. I can depend on him and on you."

"On me certainly, Dare! I did not approve the affair from the start, but I am in for it, and I am not one to forget the service you have been to me."

"Where has Vivian been all this time?" asked Dare, abruptly. "What account does he give of himself?"

"He is straight from Brazil, was in partnership with Prescott there, I take it. He has made money, too, the miner says; it is probably that has brought him back. Strange that the officers should have got hold of him so soon."

Dare might have explained the fact had he chosen, since a word from him had given the alarm.

Three days at Thornhurst mansion went tediously by. It was dreary beyond all expression. Even Nora's bright, healthy spirits already suffered from the contrast to her late gay career. Three depressing days, during which she had seen and spoken to no mortal save the stiff, hard-faced housekeeper, the no less stiff footman, and the old deaf gardener, the sole remaining relic in the small retinue of the colonel's time, gave a different aspect to the seclusion which had not seemed forbidding of itself. The old brown house beyond the cedar grove was fast falling into a ruin; of the families who had formed a social circle in the vicinity three years before, all were scattered. Mr. Telford of the village was away on an indefinite tour with his pretty bride, the Miss Gray of that momentous Christmas-time association. The change was great as from tropical splendor to Arctic barrenness and monotony.

It was late afternoon of the fourth day after her arrival, and Nora was out upon a long walk, the only relief she found. It was a raw, cloudy, chilly day, but she never minded adverse weather. She came homeward through the evening gray with weary steps, with an oppression which she charged to the heavy atmosphere and dull surroundings weighing upon her. A man's form leaned against the gatepost, a man's eyes watched her advance with a strong, fierce gleam, quickly suppressed, as hat in hand he opened the gate. Her first intimation of his presence came when she glanced up to find herself face to face with Owen Dare.

She bowed and was passing on without observing the hand he put out, but he turned quickly to join her with reproachful solicitude. "It is a miserable day to be out, Nora, with this damp breeze. Aren't you going to give me a welcome to your own home?"

"Not mine, Mr. Dare; you know I never have considered it so. I can only wonder you should ever care to revive such memories as this place must bring to you." What was there in those straightforward brown eyes looking upon him to discompose his usually steady nerves, to send his own glance wandering, to bring that cruel gleam into his eyes again, to mark hard lines about his thin, compressed lips—what? The change was for only an instant, but it had not escaped Nora, and a doubt which she had put away more than once as an injustice not to be harbored in her

thoughts faintly stirred. Had he any knowledge of the assassin who had done his dark work so securely, with such crafty malice throwing suspicion upon one whom the strongest circumstantial evidence had never induced her to believe other than innocent? She was too just to accuse Dare even in her own mind of having been accessory to the deed, but her previous distrust of him had settled into a deeply-rooted aversion she had not tried to conquer. The swift change went over his face and was gone in a single second of time.

"How can it bring me anything but grateful remembrances? I had little claim upon its last owner, but he was exceedingly generous toward me. It was here, too, that I discovered the spell which one pair of bright eyes had thrown around me, which all your cruelty, Nora, has never broken."

"Mr. Dare?" She flashed about upon him with an indignant flush burning in her cheeks. "This is an interdicted subject between us. Why will you not understand that any reference to it is at once most distasteful and perfectly useless? There is a limit where patience ceases to be a virtue, and I arrived at it ten days ago. I can find no excuse for this resumption of a question which was settled beyond mistaking then. I shall not fail to speak to Mr. Grahame when he comes down in guarding against like annoyances in the future."

"Your guardian came down with me, Miss Carteret. I hoped to find you in a more compliant frame of mind after experiencing the solitude here. I came for the purpose of renewing my previous offer, of giving you one more chance to escape the fate you would bring upon yourself?"

She was walking swiftly toward the mansion now, in a silence that was not broken, as he apparently waited a reply. He strode in advance a pace and confronted her as they reached the wide flight of steps leading to the entrance-door, put forth his hand and clutched her wrist, when she would have passed, with a pressure like a tight, snaky coil.

"You choose to treat me with contempt, Miss Carteret. You have never taken any pains to conceal your disdain. You have treated me cruelly as you would not have done the most abject slave in creation, but because I have been your unresisting slave is no reason why I may not yet become your master. It is a long time since I first swore to myself that you should yet be my wife, and I am not the man to break my oaths when my soul is in them. I declare to you now that you shall be mine, peacefully and by fair means if you will, if not in spite of all resistance of yours, and by a less gentle way than I should prefer to use. Once more, Nora, will you listen to love instead of power; will you give me the favorable answer which you shall give sooner or later, willing or unwilling?"

She saw the demon looking out of his eyes, and a pang of fear, such as had never assailed her in all her life before shot to her heart. It carried every particle of color from her face, more than ever marble-like in the fading light, but she neither shrank nor covered under the cold horror come upon her. She looked scornfully back into those pitiless eyes.

"Once more, Mr. Dare, if you and I were the only two persons on earth, my answer would still be the same. No power on earth can avail to alter it."

"Don't be too sure of that. If I were driven to it, I would hunt you to the ends of the earth rather than let you escape me now. I am not driven to it, and you have chosen for yourself what my course toward you shall be. You force me to the use of harsh measures, and I shall not hesitate to avail myself of them. Come in, Miss Carteret, and take your guardian's opinion of the matter."

He sprang up the steps and threw open the door for her. Lights were gleaming in the little parlor where Mr. Grahame awaited them; a genial blaze was upon the hearth, an air of more general comfort prevailed than had of late reigned at Thornhurst. Nora swept into his presence, her white, intense face calm through great excitement, telling him the story at a glance. Dare followed and turned the key in the door as he closed it.

"Oh, Vane, Vane!"

"It is unpleasant for a lady to retract her word," said Dare, bowing in mock politeness toward her. "I shall not ask Miss Carteret to do so. But I shall expect her to receive me with the deference a bride should extend toward her intended when I come with the clergyman at this hour to-morrow. I appreciate the truth of the saying 'there's many a slip, etc., too fully to risk unnecessary delay. It has come my time to make demands now, Nora. Be assured that I shall never plead again."

The brown indignant eyes blazed upon him. "I should deny you at the very altar. What do you suppose me to be that you think I would have any measure forced upon me, much less a step like that which would compromise all my life? If any fraud or any unjust power could force me to really become your wife, I would defy you afterward and throw off your claim. It cannot be done, for you can never wring my consent."

"My friend the clergyman will dispense with that," said Dare, colly. "Afterward the law gives the husband control of his wife, and there are private institutions provided for just such violent and unconquerable forms of marriage as yours, my dear Nora. The subject is hardly a pleasant one, and if you please we will drop it here."

"And that is the dinner-bell," said Mr. Grahame, rising. "We will wait while you put off your wraps, Nora."

"Thanks; I do not wish dinner."

"You had better come, my dear. Even sentiment cannot exist without a substance."

"You will please hold me excused, sir, now and for the remainder of the evening."

"In that case," said Dare, "let me make my adieux. I shall go back to the village for the night. I can leave you safely in such excellent care as your guardian will extend."

He bowed but did not offer his hand, unlocked the door and held it wide for her. She swept out with the stateliness of an injured queen, but up in her own room where a dim light was burning, with the bolt slipped home, she fell on her knees by the bed and buried her face in the covering, a silent, motionless form as long minutes went by.

She had never felt her desolation so completely before. They would never dare to put their threats into execution; they could not do it if they had the will; they were trying to frighten her into submission—and the proud lips curled, the heart swelled in bitter defiance, but under all was the feeling of utter loneliness, of isolation from all close sympathy upon the earth.

Bright stars were shining out of an opaline sky when she lifted her face, changed and worn in this little time. She crossed the floor, throwing a window wide, and leaning out to catch the breeze upon her brow. Did it bring to her a message from some far-away point of the wide world where she might fancy a weary wanderer straying?

Her hands went up to clasp her forehead; the firm lips quivered and parted, and through the proud-pained heart thrilled the cry which her uttered, which was of itself a revelation she had crushed from her own recognition through three long years:

"Oh, Vane, Vane!"

To be continued—commenced in No. 262.

The Revelation of a Night.

BY ARCHIE C. IRONS.

"Twas all through the roses so ripe and so red, And all when the summer was shining her best,"

sung a manly voice.

"Ray Clifford, upon my word! You nearly scared the small stock of sense that I have from me. I thought you were in New York."

Mr. Clifford swung himself across the stream with a little laugh, and looked down on the tall, graceful woman who stood beside him.

"Which shows the fallacy of your thoughts, Miss Leicester! Do you suppose, for an instant, that I could stay in hot, dusty New York, with the manifold attractions of Almy Place and Miss Lillie Leicester? No, indeed! I expected you would give me credit for better taste than that."

A sudden flush rose to Miss Leicester's face, and she looked persistently across the little stream for an instant. Wild climbing roses, waving grass, blood-red heath, contrasting vividly with the bright, green leaves; and the June fragrance among them all, and the June sunshines falling athwart them in little silver bars through the grand old trees. Only an instant saw these; then the long lashes were lifted, and the brown eyes flushed him an amused glance.

"But, you see I don't, though! and I shall give you less if you don't quite pay compliments. What do you suppose Miss Rochester would say?"

Ray Clifford's face flushed, then grew pale at the carelessly spoken words. Miss Leicester looked bewildered.

"I sincerely beg your pardon," she said, "but I did not think—I had no idea—"

He made a little gesture, and then laughed merrily.

"It is not you who should beg my pardon," he said, "but I yours for disturbing you, but I couldn't resist a run across the woods from the station, and had no idea of finding you here. How grand everything looks! Only it is so oppressively hot one can't enjoy it."

They were walking now, along the avenue of trees through which you could catch glimpses of Almy Place. Fountains, arbors, parks, terraces and drives were around, the whole lying motionless in the noonday sun. Not a soul was stirring about the house, and windows and doors were thrown wide to admit the air. The shrill pipe of a locust over their heads, and a bird in his cage in the bay-window, sending out his cheery song, were the only signs of life.

"What a contrast to the dusty, bustling city!" Ray said, as they paused under a clematis-draped arbor. "I guess we are the only ones enjoying it. The balance of the company seems to be taking their noonday siesta."

He broke off a little spray of flowers, twirling them carelessly in his hand, as he spoke. He looked a fitting prince for the royal woman by his side, with his splendid physique, graceful carriage and handsome, sun-browned face.

"If you are persistent in refusing what is your own interest, my dear, we must consult that interest for you," he answered with dignity. "Dare is suited to you in all respects; I approve of him as your future husband; and I beg you may not occasion trouble by holding some absurd prejudice of your own."

"Do you mean, sir, that you have leagued yourself with him? Is this keeping the trust Colonel Vivian reposed in you? I cannot escape persecution, if you countenance it, but if your control over my actions extended for years instead of a few weeks yet, if you employed years in attempting to coerce me in a manner like this, you would never succeed."

A dark red flush crept up the merchant's brow. Like many another unreasonable man, knowing himself in the wrong, he went into a passion to cover his confusion.

"You shall give what you have never been particular in according me—obedience," he declared angrily. "Make up your mind to what is inevitable, Miss Carteret. Dare shall be your husband, and that within this very week, if only for the purpose of preventing you from scattering Colonel Vivian's bequest to the winds. No girl in her senses would act as you have proposed. My trust will not permit me to sanction such folly."

Nora's lips compressed in a firm straight line, her eyes had in them the look of a hunted creature turned at bay, but she did not speak a word.

and the love which should have been hers, was Lillie Leicester's. He had striven against it, with all the strength of his powerful will, but it was inexorable as fate itself. He leaned toward her, his clustering hair almost brushing her cheek, hardly knowing what he did.

"Oh, Lillie, Lillie!" he cried, passionately,

"I love you! I love you!"

She started back, white and stern, a scornful light blazing in her eyes.

"You forget what you are saying, Mr. Clifford. Such words from you are only an insult!"

He recoiled from her, white to the very lips, and recovered his self-possession by a mighty effort.

"Miss Leicester," he said, and his voice was husky, "I can never atone for this; but I hardly knew what I was about. It shall never happen again. Whatever my fate, I will meet it like a man. May I hope for your forgiveness?"

"Bon jour, monsieur," said a silvery voice; "who would have expected to see you here?"

He turned suddenly, and confronted a superb-looking woman, clad in a light outdoor costume, with jewels glittering on her shapely hands—Miss Audrey Rochester! She glanced at him, half suspiciously, from one to the other.

"Upon my word, you two people look remarkably strange, somehow; and no wonder! I suppose I did come rather suddenly."

"He turned suddenly, and confronted a superb-looking woman, clad in a light outdoor costume, with jewels glittering on her shapely hands—Miss Audrey Rochester! She glanced at him, half suspiciously, from one to the other.

"Oh, Ray, Ray!" she said, "I do love you, better than life!"

Was he satisfied? I think he ought to have been. And Miss Rochester is Miss Rochester still.

that you know me," she answered; "and I can tell you that I think the ball splendid, Mr. Clifford!"

"Diamond cut diamond," he returned, laughing in his turn, and removing his mask. "Do you know," leaning toward her suddenly, "that this masked ball is the turning-point in my life?"

This sudden earnestness frightened her. She endeavored to wrench the hand he had clasped from him, but he held it firm.

"I am a free man, Lillie—free to love whom I please," he said, "and by Miss Rochester's full consent. She is no longer anything to me; but you, oh, my darling, you are everything, my very life! You shall hear the circumstances, and judge whether I have not a perfect right to tell you this."

He related hurriedly to her all that had passed that evening in the shrubbery, and then, holding both her hands in his, he looked into her shy, sweet face for his answer. She lifted her brown eyes, all misty with unshed tears, to his.

"Oh, Ray, Ray!" she said, "I do love you, better than life!"

Was he satisfied? I think he ought to have been. And Miss Rochester is Miss Rochester still.

A \$4.00 BOOK FOR \$1.50.

. The People's Common

THE SWORD OF HUNKER BILL.

BY JOE JOT, JR.

He lay upon his easy bed,
His eyes were growing dim;
He wore two pairs of spectacles,
And called his son to him.

"Come hither you, my son, the hero said,

"And live while he stills—

And quickly from your antlers bring

The sword of Hunker Bill."

The sword was brought; his spectacles
Lit with a sudden flame;

He took the ancient corn out ter-

Escaliber by name—

And said, "My boy, go in the field

And labor while the sun is high,

And when the sun is at them there weeds

With the sword of Hunker Bill.

"This sword revolved in the old Rev-

er's days,

It cut full many a goosehead off

That came along our ways.

In battle every Britisher

Felt that it swung to kill,

His body from his head was loosed

By the sword of Hunker Bill.

"I'll whet it upon a brick;

And cut their hair in style;

I shaved their faces without soap,

And you'll think I'm a knave,

When ever they saw this good sword raised

They felt a sudden thrill.

And so I cut their coat-tails off

With the sword of Hunker Bill.

"This sword has active service seen

When we'd put up our pork,

And when I kept a butcher-shop

It's seen some bloody work.

And so it is good stuff still,

It looks like some hand-saw, but

It's the sword of Hunker Bill.

"I cannot leave you gold or lands,

But this is just as good,

Take this and at six bits a cord

Go out and chop some wood!"

The hero's spectacles grew dim;

He rose up with a will,

And spanked the boy outrageously

With the sword of Hunker Bill.

LEAVES

From a Lawyer's Life.

BY A. GOULD PENN.

IX.—The Birch-bark Will.

LAW and justice are not synonymous terms, as many would like to believe; and no class of men become better acquainted with this fact than lawyers.

I would not have you think, kind reader, I am egotistical as to claim that I am always on the right side. Indeed, so far from this being the case, I, in common with others of my profession, am frequently called upon to espouse a bad cause.

The vilest criminal is entitled to the benefit of legal assistance, and every lawyer should hold himself ready to guard a client against any infringement of his natural rights.

A stranger stepped into my office one day, and handed me a card, on which was the name of "Jacob Ellet, Jr."

"You are Mr. Smith, I presume?"

"Yes, sir, that is my name; what can I do for you?"

"I have come to consult with you about an important matter," said the man, seating himself with great deliberation.

As is my usual custom, I at once proceeded to take the measure of my visitor, and the inspection resulted in my forming a very unfavorable opinion of him.

He was a man of apparently thirty-five years of age, and dressed somewhat flashily. But his countenance plainly showed him to be a hard drinker, and, indeed, his breath and actions convinced me that he was even then in a state of inebriation. Yet his condition was not such as to seemingly affect his locomotion or to obscure his mind, and he spoke readily and very intelligently.

"I am the only son of Jacob Ellet, the great lumber-merchant of whom I suppose you have often heard?"

"Certainly, sir. I knew your father well, having frequently transacted business for him. He is dead, I believe."

"Yes, sir, and it was in reference to the estate that I called to consult with you."

"Did your father leave a will?"

"He did, sir, and I will now state to you the facts, and ask you what you think of my rights under the will."

"I have an only sister, Bessie, now about twenty-five years of age. We two are mentioned in father's will as his only heirs. His estate, as you are probably aware, is quite large. But, in order to give you a full understanding of the matter I must tell you something of my personal history."

"Father and I never got along well together, so at twenty years of age I left home, and have not been back until recently. I was a spoiled boy, and inclined to be rough; in fact, I have lived a desperate life among the fast characters of an Eastern city. I don't need to tell you the extent of my operations, but I have been through the roughest phases of such a life, and am not yet a very good subject of which to form a missionary, as you see."

"Truly, the fellow is decidedly frank, I thought."

"Well, hearing of father's death, I thought perhaps there would be something for me out of his estate, so I came home, and hunted up his will—in which he makes me a full heir."

"Now, in come certain officious friends of sister Bessie, and persuade her to contest that will and claim all the estate, saying that I was not deserving of even a shilling, and that father had repeatedly declared his intentions of cutting me off without a cent. Hence they claim that this will is bogus, or that there is a codicil or new will that father made. But, I don't propose to give up my rights on their supposition; so they are about to enter suit to break the will."

"Is the will duly probated?" I asked.

"It is; and here is a certified copy of it," handing me the document.

I took it and examined it carefully. It was without doubt the *bona fide* last will and testament of Jacob Ellet, Sr., in which he divided his possessions equally between his son Jacob and daughter Bessie.

There could be no mistaking this fact, and no amount of verbal testimony would avail to set it aside.

"What do you think of it?" anxiously inquired Ellet, as I ceased my inspection of the will.

"What do they propose to show, as to your father's intentions concerning the disposition of his property?" I asked, evasively, not being sufficiently clear in my own mind to answer his question pointedly.

"They claim that my father said in the presence of various persons that I was a sad dog, and should never see a farthing of his money. And that he told others that he meant to destroy this will and make another, ignoring me. Also, I believe, they will claim that he was not of sound mind at the time of making this will."

"Stuff—nonsense!" I cried, becoming more

convinced that the will was valid; "let them try it, and see how they will get badly beaten."

So it was arranged that we, Smith & Ayres, were to defend this will, and Jacob Ellet, Jr., left.

On making some inquiry I found that our client was a man of the blackest character, and that he had even made threats of a terrible revenge against his sister and her advisers if they should succeed in depriving him of his inheritance.

"Will we not risk a great deal in reputation by assisting such a scoundrel?" asked Lewis Ayres, one day, after we had learned the facts.

"I admire your caution, Lewis, but then the character of our client cannot effect the justness of his claim under this will. He may be ever so undeserving of his good fortune, but that is no fault of ours. Gordon & Strong, from the city, will be our opponents, and they will try our mettle, my boy."

"Very well; so much the better if we win," said Ayres.

"We must win!" I exclaimed.

Sure enough, the action was promptly commenced to set aside the will of Jacob Ellet, and as we were equally desirous of arriving at the end of the matter but little time was occupied in legal skirmishing, and in due time the case was called for trial.

We found we had not underestimated the talents of Gordon & Strong, but, secure in the belief that they could never produce sufficient testimony to break the will, we felt that victory was in our grasp.

The trial occupied some days, and all their testimony as to the validity of the will, the incompetency of the testator, and verbal promises and declarations came to naught, until we at last found that our opponents were merely fighting for time. What object they could have in this we could not fathom, and hence we were working hard to bring the case to a close.

"What do you make of this desire on their part for delay?" Ayres asked me.

"I cannot understand it," I replied, "unless they are expecting to get in some new testimony, but I cannot imagine what it may be."

"They have been using the telegraph very frequently, I find," said Ayres, "and it may

be that his testimony was like the rest, of no avail, but under Strong's questioning he continued:

"After thinking a little while, as if not minding his sufferings, he told me to bring him a clean piece of birch-bark. I accordingly went out and found a nice piece and brought it to him; then he told my friend, that was a man of some education, to take a piece of red chalk that we used to mark timber, and he dictated while he wrote."

In an instant I was on my feet and demanded that the writing be at once produced, or the testimony ruled out.

Smiling at my eagerness, Gordon produced a roll of birch-bark and demanded of the witness if that was the identical piece used on the occasion.

"It is," answered the witness.

"May it please the court," said Gordon, "we have here what we claim to be a valid codicil to the will of Jacob Ellet, deceased, and we ask that it be duly admitted to probate and placed on record."

He then proceeded to read as follows:

"Whereas I, Jacob Ellet, Sr., did on the 4th day of May, 18—, make my last will and testament of that date, I do declare the following to be a codicil to the same: I do hereby give and bequeath to my daughter, Bessie Ellet, all my estate, both real and personal, of whatsoever kind, to the entire exclusion of my son, Jacob Ellet, Jr."

This codicil was duly signed, and properly witnessed, and the two lumber-men who had witnessed his signature, came forward and proved the same.

To say we were astonished and confounded, but poorly served our feelings. There was no avoiding this evidence; the Birch Bark Will was perfect.

It was admitted to probate, of course, and our case was terminated in a manner that we could not have foreseen or prevented.

But our chagrin was as nothing compared to the bitter cursing of our client. All the venom of his depraved heart was let out, and he left the court-room muttering direst threats.

That night the Ellet mansion was burned to the ground, and there was no doubt but that the wicked son had applied the torch. But he made good his escape and we never again saw or heard of him.

"Ah! And who will put me there, most noble Don William? You forget that I command this brig, that the men are of my choosing, and that there is not one among them who

is a share?"

"Understand me, Don William. I am going to take my share in a gentlemanly way,

and that way is this: I am willing to marry the Senora Vida."

Doctor Vail bounded to his feet, and struck the impudent scoundrel across the face with his open hand.

"You dog! How dare you come to me with such a proposition as that?"

"It is an impudent proposition, say you?" he demanded, hoarsely. "You have dared to strike me in the face, and the mark will not leave my cheek until the insult has been atoned for, in one way or another. Curse you, I come of better blood than you, and you might think it an honor to mate your daughter with me. My father was a count of Italy."

"If you dare speak of it again, I will have you thrust into the hold, in double irons."

"Ah! And who will put me there, most noble Don William? You forget that I command this brig, that the men are of my choosing, and that there is not one among them who

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"Understand me, Don William. I am going to take my share in a gentlemanly way,

and that way is this: I am willing to marry the Senora Vida."

Doctor Vail sprang up the ladder, and took in the situation at a glance. He saw that the pirates were prepared for treachery, and that two boats, containing in all fourteen men, were leaving the side of the schooner, and coming down under the full sweep of the oars. Five minutes later, a gallant-looking young man, in the uniform of a Yankee lieutenant, sprung over the rail, quickly followed by half a dozen of the men, each holding his cutlass bare.

"What brig is this?" demanded the lieutenant.

"La Palestina, out of Cartagena," replied Mafordi.

"I am Elbert Deane, an officer in the United States navy, and am commissioned by Captain Mauders, of the schooner Jackson, to demand your letters and papers."

"This is an honest brig," whined Mafordi.

"Elbert Deane," cried Doctor Vail, in astonishment and delight. "I am glad to see you here. You have come in time to save me, and my dear daughter, for this is the pirate Mafordi, a man who—"

A cutlass gleamed in the hand of Red Mafordi, and alighted upon the head of the brave old man with a sickening sound. He was standing in the companion-way, and at that dreadful blow, pitched head foremost down the ladder, where he lay bleeding, at the very feet of his daughter, as she sprung from her cabin at the alarm, followed by the negro women, one of whom was her own maid. With a cry of horror Vida Vail flung herself upon the body of her father, while the women, with clasped hands and cries of terror, shrank into corners of the cabin, or fell upon their knees.

"Down with the murderers!" cried a voice, which seemed strangely familiar to Vida.

"All you Jacksons, away; cutlass and pistols, you sea draf!"

The clash of steel succeeded, and a terrible conflict took place upon the deck of the brig. Although both were outnumbered, the blue-jackets were trained men, who had fought all through that war, just ended, in which the United States disputed supremacy with the Mistress of the Sea. Vida heard hoarse cries of rage and despair, and then a stunning cheer.

A moment later, and a man appeared at the opening above, and descended the ladder at a bound. It was the young lieutenant, Elbert Deane, bearing in his hand a cutlass crimsoned to the hilt.

"Vida!" he cried, eagerly. "You are safe, and the blood of the pirate Mafordi is on my steel."

"You villain!"

"Without doubt, senor. But be that as it may, these men are mine, and will obey me without a word. Fool, do you know who I am? Do you know in whose ship you have taken passage? I am Red Mafordi, the Cruel of the Caribbean."

Doctor Vail started, and looked wildly at the speaker. He had heard of Red Mafordi, half pirate, half smuggler, a man stained by a thousand crimes, who would have thought no more of a murder than of the most common event of everyday life. He had taken passage in this brig from Cartagena to Key West, little dreaming that a trap had been laid to induce him to come on board.

"Ah, you see that we do our work well, doctor," he said, laughing. "Seriously, now, I am tired of this life, and hope for a change. I am willing to put all my past life behind me, and, as your son-in-law, begin a new life. You have only to refuse, and—well, you ought to know what will happen if